

is the cradle of humanity, but also a big part of humanity's future.

I leave you with this thought: When I think of the troubles of Africa, rooted in tribal differences; when I think of the continuing troubles in America across racial lines, rooted in the shameful way we brought slaves here from West Africa so long ago, and our continuing challenges as we integrate wave after wave after wave of new immigrants from new places around the world, I am struck by the fact that life's greatest joy is our common humanity, and life's greatest curse is our inability to see our common humanity.

In Africa, life is full of joy and difficulty. But for too long, the African people have lacked for friends and allies to help the joys overcome the difficulties. The United States will be a friend for life.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks,

he referred to master of ceremonies and summit national cochair Andrew Young and his wife, Carolyn; Salim A. Salim, Secretary General, Organization for African Unity; President Daniel T. Moi of Kenya; President Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice President Atiku Abubakar of Nigeria; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Noah Samara, chairman and chief executive officer, WorldSpace Corp.; Gayle Smith, Director of African Affairs, National Security Council; Minister of Health Crispus W.C.B. Kiyonga of Uganda; former President Nelson Mandela and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; and the following National Summit on Africa officers: national co-chair Bishop John Ricard, board of directors members Andrea L. Taylor and Herschelle S. Challenor, and president and chief executive officer Leonard H. Robinson, Jr. The President also referred to ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, and SADC, the South African Development Community.

Statement on Indications of a Third Consecutive Budget Surplus *February 18, 2000*

Today we received further evidence that our economic strategy of fiscal discipline is working. When I came into office, the debt had quadrupled over the previous 12 years. The deficit had reached a record \$290 billion and was projected to keep rising as far as the eye could see. As a result, interest rates were high, and growth was slow. We have turned this around with strong deficit reduction packages in 1993 and 1997 and tough choices in each and every budget. As a result, we have enjoyed back-to-back budget surpluses for the first time in over 40 years.

The latest financial numbers from the Department of the Treasury indicate that we are on track this year to reach a third consecutive budget surplus. The surplus in the first 4 months of this fiscal year was \$25 billion larger than the surplus last year. These surpluses will allow us to repay a projected \$157 billion in debt this year alone, bringing the debt reduction over 3 years to nearly \$300 billion. If we maintain our strategy of fiscal discipline, we can keep our economy strong and pay down the debt by 2013 for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Message on the Observance of Presidents' Day, 2000 *February 18, 2000*

I am pleased to join all Americans in observing Presidents' Day.

Today we salute the leadership and achievements of all those who have held America's highest elected office, and we celebrate with

special pride the rich legacies of Presidents Washington and Lincoln.

As our first President, George Washington gave strength and legitimacy to our young democracy while ensuring that the newly formed federal government remained accountable to the American people. A leader of exceptional courage and vision in both war and peace, he helped shape the 13 colonies into a nation dedicated to the values of liberty and justice for all.

More than 70 years later, Abraham Lincoln sought to reunite Americans behind these same fundamental values. Through the extraordinary hardship and sacrifice of the Civil War, he remained devoted to the causes of freedom and equality and to preserving our Union. In the waning days of that cruel conflict, he showed remarkable compassion and determination in his

efforts to bind our nation's wounds and restore dignity to all our people.

It was within view of our national monuments to these two great leaders that thousands of our fellow Americans recently joined Hillary and me to welcome the first moments of the 21st century. The era of unrivaled prosperity and peace in which we now live affords us a singular opportunity to reaffirm the values that guided Washington and Lincoln and that have shaped our national character and destiny for more than 200 years. By strengthening our democracy, embracing equal justice and opportunity, and celebrating our diversity, we can continue to build the America that they envisioned and strived so hard to achieve.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Statement on Signing the Hillory J. Farias and Samantha Reid Date-Rape Drug Prohibition Act of 2000

February 18, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2130, the "Hillory J. Farias and Samantha Reid Date-Rape Drug Prohibition Act of 2000." I applaud the sponsors of this important legislation.

This legislation will, among other things, place gamma hydroxybutyric acid (GHB)—a drug that is abused for its psychoactive effects and, less frequently but more perniciously, used as a tool by sexual predators—in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). Making GHB a Schedule I controlled substance appropriately reflects the Congress' judgment that GHB has a high potential for abuse by sexual predators; that its possession and distribution should therefore be prohibited; and that violators should be subject to stringent criminal sanctions.

The Act directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to develop and implement a plan for a national campaign to educate young adults, youths, law enforcement personnel, educators, school nurses, rape victim counselors, and hospital emergency room personnel on: (1) the dangers of date-rape drugs; (2) the applicability of the CSA to such drugs, including penalties; (3) how to recognize signs that an individual may be a victim of such drugs,

and (4) the appropriate response when an individual exhibits such symptoms. The Act also requires HHS to collect data on the incidence of date-rape drug abuse and report the information annually to the Congress.

The Act will not impede ongoing research into the potential legitimate use of this drug to treat the special needs of those suffering from narcolepsy. Indeed, this Act creates a special exemption that provides that the manufacture and distribution of this drug for properly approved research purposes will be subject to the physical security requirements of Schedule III rather than Schedule I.

In approving H.R. 2130, I note that section 8(c)(1) of the bill requires the Attorney General to submit to the Committees on the Judiciary of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report that sets forth the recommendations of a unit of the Drug Enforcement Administration, an entity within the Department of Justice. By mandating the disclosure of an internal Department recommendation, this provision infringes on my constitutional responsibility to preserve the confidentiality of executive branch deliberations. Accordingly, I shall construe the